

Date and time: Thursday June 26 2014 12:55 - 6:45 pm

Weather: Pr 33mm; RH 73%; BP 101.8 kPa; calm; cloud/sun; T 24° C

Activity: Tree dedication, bird survey and arthropod logging

We had arranged some weeks ago, to have a site visit from Dave Martin and Linda Wladarski, two top birders in southern Ontario. When we arrived on site, Dave and Linda were already there, waiting for us in the Upper Meadow. They had located two, possibly three breeding pairs of Bobolinks. (Later Pat would flush one from the side of the track.) Dave pointed out that the habitat was not ideal for Bobolinks, being only a few hectares in size and succeeding into scrubland from the open meadow habitat most preferred by these birds. But there they were.



One of the Bobolink nesting sites is in the middle of this image at middle distance. Dave and Linda found a second nest far to the right, off-image

Dave and Linda (see IMAGES below) had spent the morning on site, compiling in the process a list of some 47 birds observed. Thanks to their efforts we not only have a relatively enormous bird list for the day, but two new species of birds for the ATBI database, as below. Dave opines that but for a handful of migrant species, the bird list for Newport Forest is substantially complete.

Prior to departing to the West Meadow for the final leg of their survey, Dave and Linda chatted with us in the Nook about their findings. Among the more notable

birds were not only the nesting Bobolinks, but four Blue-winged Warblers, an Alder Flycatcher, an American Redstart, and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

While Pat, Dave and Linda visited Fleming Creek, I prepared for an afternoon of arthropod hunting. I set up four honey traps and readied my gear. After the three left for the West Meadow, I visited the honey traps. Nothing but ants. Lots of ants. I spent the next two hours sweeping with the net and recording finds. Once again I concentrated on edge habitats, hoping to get the best of both worlds. Meadow edge and forest edge. In addition I took one collecting run through the Regen Zone, now succeeding into first-growth forest. After Pat returned we hunted together, ending with the counts summarized here:

Previously listed:	6
Unidentified:	4
Identified and logged:	11
	—
Total found	21

We then enjoyed a supper of potato salad and cold cuts in the Nook before calling it a day and driving out (gingerly) past the new Bobolink tenants.

Tree Dedication Report:

Some 21 people showed up last Saturday for the dedication ceremony, in which Jane's husband Andre unveiled a plaque commemorating the many contributions of Jane Bowles to area ecology and conservation. As the Dewdneys who hosted the gathering pointed out, Jane was a founding member of the Thames Talbot Land Trust. The Sassafras that we dedicated on this day was originally found by Jane deep in the Fleming Creek Forest and transplanted by Kee many years ago to its present location near the visitors' trailer.

Everyone then adjourned to the Nook for refreshments after which some visited the creek (just downslope from the Nook) while others went to the river (a 400 m walk). At the creek young Rowan Yates found a new large Tetragnathid spider (See New Species). We expected little less from a kid whose parents are both biologists. Meanwhile at the river, Erin Carroll found many fish fry swimming in the lagoons of Mussel Beach. One of these was (another!) Longnose Gar fry. She also spotted a Shore Beetle, aquatic counterpart of the Six-spotted Tiger Beetle.

Pete Chapman, a birder and all-round naturalist, contributed to the following Lep List: Giant Swallowtail; Great Spangled Fritillary; Hobomok Skipper; Inornate Ringlet; Monarch (2)

Phenology: Wild Strawberries ripe, Blackcaps ripening

New Species: (So many species, so little time!)

Alder Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax alnorum</i>	WM/Rd DM Je26/14
Mourning Warbler	<i>Geothlypis philadelphia</i>	WM DM Je26/14
‘Giant Tetragnathid’	<i>Tetragnatha elongata</i>	FC rkKD Je21/14
‘White Sargeant Crab’	<i>Xysticus [cristata]</i>	LMS KD Je26/14
Peppered Jumper	<i>Pelegrina galathea</i>	LM/S KD Je26/14
‘Rufus Damsel Bug’	<i>Nabis [rufusculus]</i>	LM KD Je26/14
Red-bordered Mirid	<i>Metriorrhynchomiris dislocatus</i>	LM KD Je26
‘Two-spot Black Mirid’	<i>Polymerus venaticus</i>	LM KD Je26
Stilt-legged Fly	<i>Rainieria antennaepes</i>	LM KD Je26/14
‘Pygmy Robber Fly’	<i>Cyrtopogon</i> sp.	GF/Rd KD Je21/14
Metallic Wood Borer	<i>Agrilus</i> sp	GF kdSP Je08/14
Sun Beetle	<i>Amara</i> sp	LM KD Je26/14

Notes: Names in single quotes are made up. Apologies for that super-long genus name! Amara beetle is either *A. aenea* or *A. patruellus*.

Birds (See the Martin-Wladarski list in the IMAGES section below.)

Trail Cam Report: (See IMAGES.)

Readers Write:

Entomologist Dan Bickel turns in this astonishing report of insect roadkill in the US., asking somewhat sarcastically, “Now, do we need a collecting permit for that?” The number of Lepidoptera killed along roadways for the entire state of Illinois during one week: 20,000,000 The number of monarch butterflies killed may have exceeded 500,000 individuals. He refers to the following report:

McKenna, D.M., McKenna, K.M., Malcolm, S.B., Berenbaum, M.R. 2001. Mortality of Lepidoptera along roadways in central Illinois. *J. Lepid. Soc.* 55, 63-68.

IMAGES:



This Common Groundhog appeared around noon on Friday June 20. It was the first time this species had ever shown up in trail cam imagery. The animal is perched on a massive log that provides morning shade.

Trail Cam Report: (The two trail cams now produce far more information than we can possibly use effectively. Here's a minimum take on activity so far in 2014. The numbers refer to counts of individual animals, whether simultaneous or serial.

Blue Jay (3); Common Groundhog (1); Eastern Chipmunk (2-3); Eastern Cottontail (2); Eastern Gray Squirrel (black phase) (2); Mourning Dove (2); Raccoons and their kits (10); Red Squirrel (1); Southern Flying Squirrel (2); Striped Chipmunk (2); Virginia Deer (3-4 adults, 2 fawns); Wild Turkey (3)



Dave Martin and Linda Wladarski pose by the Bowles Sassafras. Both are expert birders. Their bird list for the day appears below. I asked Dave to add our locale codes to the records:

BIRDS - 47 species

Mallard, 6 moulting males resting on shoreline of Thames river

Wild Turkey, RSF, 1

Turkey Vulture, LM, 3

Bald Eagle, LM, 4 adults, 1 juvenile

Red-tailed Hawk, LM, 1

Red-bellied Woodpecker, GF, 1

Downy Woodpecker, RSF, 1

Hairy Woodpecker, BCF, 3

Northern Flicker, BCF, 3

Pileated Woodpecker, BCF, 2

Mourning Dove, ER, 3

Yellow-billed Cuckoo, BCF, 1

Alder Flycatcher, WM, 1 [heard singing male, likely breeding]

Great Crested Flycatcher, BCF, 5

Eastern Kingbird, UM, 1

Red-eyed Vireo, HB, 5

Purple Martin, LM, 2 soaring high overhead
Tree Swallow, UM, 1
Blue Jay, GF, 3
American Crow, BCF, 3

Black-capped Chickadee, BCF, 7
Tufted Titmouse, RSF, 1
White-breasted Nuthatch, RSF, 1
House Wren, BCF, 2
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, RSF, 1

Eastern Bluebird, UM, 4 [2 adults with 2 fledged young, adults carrying food to young]
Wood Thrush, RSF, 2
American Robin, RSF, 2
Gray Catbird, BCF, 9
European Starling, UM, 1
Cedar Waxwing, GF, 5

Blue-winged Warbler, LM, edge of BCF, CF, RSF, 4 - breeding species or migrant?
Common Yellowthroat, LM, 9
Yellow Warbler, LM, 8
American Redstart, 1 RSF [Abundant at Skunk's Misery]
Mourning Warbler, BCF, RSF, 2 territories - new species ?

Eastern Towhee, LM, 4
Field Sparrow, LM, 5
Song Sparrow, 15
Rose-breasted Grosbeak, RSF, 3
Indigo Bunting, GF, 6
Northern Cardinal BCF, 6

Bobolink, UM, 2 adult males, 2 adult females, 2+ recently fledged young, additional young begging calls from nest. Confirmed breeding in UM [agitated adults, fledged young, adults carrying food, adult carrying fecal sac].
Common Grackle, RSF, 20
Brown-headed Cowbird, UM, 1
Baltimore Oriole, RSF, 3
American Goldfinch, UM, 2

The couple also filed a list of lepidoptera and other animals seen during their rounds of the property.